

Career Biography

GEORGIA LUTZ

**Senior Scientist/Country Liaison Officer/AGRINET Coordinator
International Agriculture Improvement Center**

I am a management and agriculture professional with more than 14 years of research, capacity building, and supervisory experience in international agriculture. I currently execute my mission to empower national research institutions to meet needs of smallholder farmers by excelling in multiple functions at the International Agriculture Improvement Center, based in the Philippines. These functions include Senior Scientist and the Center's Country Liaison Officer for the Philippines, managing the Center and representing it in the host country. Since 1998, I have also engaged in extensive networking and outreach as Coordinator of the Agricultural Biotechnology Network (AGRINET), overseeing administration of a training, research, and information network involving the Center and nine national research institutes/universities in six Asian countries.

Currently, I also serve as interim Coordinator of a new applied Center project in Asia linking science with farmers, using participatory approaches that involve many stakeholders in the community. The Asian Development Bank funded this project based on a grant proposal that I wrote with input from Center colleagues.

In my multiple roles, I contribute to project planning and budgeting, as well as guide the implementation of network and country work plans, analyzing problems that prevent achieving those plans, ensuring accountability, monitoring results, and proposing solutions to keep projects on track, on time, and on budget.

As a vital component in building an enabling environment for scientists in national programs, I collaborate in bringing visibility to and encouraging national support for the AGRINET project by interacting effectively with senior-level government and university officials (including members of the AGRINET Steering Committee), donors, and various stakeholders. Through my leadership, AGRINET now enjoys a reputation as a credible, active network for crop improvement in Asia, as documented in an impact-assessment study of the network, which is available upon request.

Previously, I served as a long-term Consultant at the International Agriculture Research Institute, overseeing technology development/transfer in the Agriculture Biotechnology Network. I adapted molecular marker applications to developing country conditions and supported their integration into rice breeding programs.

Productive interactions with various stakeholders in a culturally sensitive manner have been a hallmark of my positions in the Center, and my success has been measured in the "collaborative advantage" that I created through these inter-disciplinary, multi-stakeholder, and multi-country partnerships. I possess first-hand knowledge and understanding of the workings of international agricultural research centers, the environment in which they operate, and their interactions with donors, and various stakeholders. My strengths are my on-the-ground experience in partnership building, along with effective interpersonal and negotiation skills.

My research in the use of biotechnologies as research tools has spanned a variety of areas, including plant-microbe interactions, as well as rice and maize molecular genetics. As a scientist at the Center, my experience has continued to expand, and I have enhanced my skills set, from project management to increasingly responsible leadership roles. During the recent Center strategic-planning exercise, I played a key role on the Task Force on Partners/Networks/Systems.

I earned my PhD and MS in Microbiology from the University of Hawaii and also hold a master's degree in Public Administration (MPA) and a bachelor's degree in Biology from the University of the Philippines. I continue my professional growth through numerous leadership and management courses.